

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE RUSSIAN POULTRY MARKET

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I have two comments I would like to make. I first would like to respond very briefly to a speech earlier in the day made by one of my colleagues before I discuss the foreign relations authorization bill pending before the Senate. I would like to address briefly the earlier comments of my good friend, the distinguished Senator from Arizona, regarding the President's involvement in resolving our trade impasse with Russia. The distinguished Senator suggests that it was inappropriate for the President to impress upon Mr. Yeltsin that the poultry industry is important to Mr. Clinton's home State, as well as to many other parts of America; I must say forthrightly, the single most important industry in my State.

Since Russia announced over a month ago that it was banning the import of all American poultry, I have been in daily contact with the White House, our Trade Ambassador Mickey Kantor, and our Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, to keep this \$500 million market open to American poultry growers.

Fortunately, the hard work of the administration has paid off. Just this week the Russians announced that they are backing down. This would not, in my view, have been possible without the direct involvement of the President, the Vice President, Ambassador Kantor and Secretary Glickman.

Since 1982, Sussex County, one of our counties in Delaware, has remained the No. 1 broiler-producing county in the United States of America. The Delmarva peninsula is home to 21,000 poultry workers, and produces more than 600 million birds per year. It is a major supplier of the Russian poultry market.

Last year, for example, one major Delaware producer exported 1,300 tons of frozen poultry to Russia. Another exported \$10 million worth of poultry products.

Those of us who understand this industry know that it is under increasing competitive pressure as grain prices soar and the price of other meats fall. But, they know how to prosper in a competitive environment. That is why we can ship higher quality poultry to Moscow and Saint Petersburg and still beat their prices. In turn, it is the responsibility of this and, I believe, every administration to maintain the open international markets that they need, not only for American poultry but for all American products. Keep in mind that Russia's market was closed as recently as 1991. Now, Russia purchases \$500 million worth of poultry every

year, and the market has been growing. This is just one of the many products they purchase.

This has been a real success story for American exports. Of American exports, the agricultural community is the only real success story in American exports of continuing, year-in-and-year-out consequence.

I, for one, think it is perfectly appropriate, as a matter of fact absolutely necessary, for the President of the United States, in this case President Clinton, to let President Yeltsin know just how important these exports are. I cannot think of any better way for a President to drive the point home than to make this issue personal.

I wanted very much for the President to successfully resolve this problem of the poultry industry. As any negotiator on the floor of this Senate understands, the one way in which, on a close call, we all appeal to our colleagues ultimately is we say: This is personal to me. This is personal to me.

Mr. Yeltsin is a politician. Every world leader is a politician. Politicians in international relations react no differently than politicians on the Senate floor.

I think it was perfectly appropriate and necessary for the President to use everything in his arsenal to convince the Russians not to violate international trade agreements with regard to poultry or anything else.

Mr. President, I believe that the people who disagree with the President acknowledge he is a master communicator. You can bet Yeltsin got the message.

So let us keep the big picture in mind and not get hung up on questions of style. The results, which are keeping 500 million dollars' worth of export markets open, speak for themselves. I think this is an important achievement on President Clinton's part and an important international trade issue. Had he failed, it would have set the precedent for significant trade consequences for the United States, and not just in poultry. I think most Americans, regardless of political party, feel the President did the right thing. I know I think he did the right thing.

AGAINST BACKDOOR ISOLATIONISM

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I would now like to register my strong opposition to the question we are about to vote on, the conference report on H.R. 1561, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act.

In spite of some modifications, this report still, in my view, suffers from the fatal flaws that afflicted the Senate bill which we voted upon in December and I voted against.

This conference report would abolish three agencies that continue to serve the interests of the American people: The Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the U.S. Information Agency, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

While unwisely folding these agencies into the Department of State, it would severely cut funding for diplomatic activities, thereby further undermining our ability to carry out a coherent foreign policy.

The report also includes a sadly inadequate sum for foreign assistance, contains language that would be extremely damaging to POW/MIA identification in Vietnam, unwisely tampers with the 1982 joint communique with China, and generally attempts to give the impression that it is an internationalist piece of legislation.

Mr. President, the intent and impact of this legislation is not internationalist at all. No, the report is, in fact, yet another attempt at backdoor isolationism, in my view.

The legislation has its genesis in a deeply flawed ideological belief that no matter what the objective facts are, less Government tomorrow is better than whatever level of Government we have today. Following this simplistic logic, we have three independent agencies today so let us have two, or one, or even none tomorrow.

Never mind that all three agencies—ACDA, USIA, and AID—have all made significant strides in restructuring their activities and saving large sums of money and large sums of taxpayer dollars on their own accord.

Never mind that the missions of all three of these agencies are even more important today than they were during the cold war.

Less is more, so hack away. If this act were anything more than a numbers game, it would not blithely give the President a waiver authority to save up to any two agencies of his choice. It is like picking draft choices. I will trade you one and you pick any two you want.

It has nothing to do with anything other than the notion that less is better. For, if it were otherwise, we would say, "Mr. President, you must deal specifically with this agency or that agency." This, however, is like giving up future draft choices.

The legislation appears at first glance to have been crafted in blissful ignorance, both of what has been going on in our foreign policy apparatus for years and what it takes to conduct American foreign policy around the globe today.

How else could one explain ignoring ACDA's increasingly critical watchdog role in nuclear nonproliferation. It does not matter that the cold war is over. We now face the danger of nuclear weapons in the hands of several new countries, including rogue States like Iran and Libya.

Moreover, terrorist groups threaten to get ahold of nuclear material for the purpose of blackmailing entire cities and potentially nations. Now, more than ever, we need the proven expertise and independent judgment of ACDA.

Can we really believe that the drafters of this legislation are unaware of USIA's technologically sophisticated